

(f) the particular client node accessing a copy of a particular file on one of the remote file server node or a particular additional file server node which is most efficient for the particular client node.

5 66. The method of claim 64 wherein a particular client node is capable of communicating with at least a particular additional file server node via a local area network, the method further comprising the step of:

(f) the particular client node accessing a copy of a particular file at the particular additional file server node via the local area network.

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67. A method for providing multi-user file storage comprising the steps of:

(a) enabling each user of a pre-subscribed user group of one or more users operating an arbitrary client node at an arbitrary geographic location to communicate with a remote file server node via a wide area network,

(b) enabling each user of the pre-subscribed user group to access the files of the file group via the respective client node in communication with the remote file server node via the wide area network, including permitting more than one user of the pre-subscribed user group to access the file group at the remote file server node simultaneously,

(c) transferring an encrypted key from the remote file server node to a particular client node via a secure channel, the key being encrypted using an encryption function not known locally at the remote file server node,

(d) decrypting the transferred key at the particular client node, and

a particular client node capable of communicating with at least a particular additional file server node via a local area network, and configured for accessing a copy of a particular file at the particular additional file server node via the local area network.

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140 A system for providing multi-user file storage comprising:

a remote file server node for enabling each user of a pre-subscribed user group of one or more users operating an arbitrary client node at an arbitrary geographic location to communicate with a remote file server node via a wide area network,

a storage device at the remote file server node for enabling each user of the pre-subscribed user group to access the files of the file group via the respective client node in communication with the remote file server node via the wide area network, including permitting more than one user of the pre-subscribed user group to access the file group at the remote file server node simultaneously, and

a particular client node,

wherein the remote file server node is also configured for transferring an encrypted key from the remote file server node to a particular client node via a secure channel, the key being decryptable using a decryption function not known locally at the remote file server node,

wherein the particular client node is also configured for decrypting the transferred key at the particular client node, and for using the key at the particular client node to decrypt information of a file downloaded from the remote file server node or to encrypt information of a file prior to uploading for storage at the remote file server node, and